STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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PRESENT AND FUTURE SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NORTHERN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

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Few decades in recent history have witnessed deeper changes to the Euro-Atlantic state system than the 1990s. The Cold War ended in a way no one ever expected with equally unexpected results. Novel European, Euro-Atlantic, and global power relations emerged quickly as new dynamics came to the fore.

All actors: institutions, states, and private subjects strive to capitalize on improvements, exploit opportunities or compensate when anticipated changes threaten the status quo. In the prevailing rhetoric, such events and developments are described as achievements of goals long since established, as improvements leaving regretful pasts further and further behind.

This Strategic Research Paper argues that these changes have indeed been impressive, but finds the assumption of a steady progress towards final perfection dubious. The post-Cold War era revived several pre-Cold War issues, contributing to a more complex global situation. This is particularly valid with respect to Northern Europe---Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Nordic issues seldom arise in contemporary debate and diplomacy in Europe. For decades, the region has been considered a harmonious part of the world, indeed a model with respect to social security, democracy, and intra-state cooperation, presenting few complexities beyond the East-West confrontation. The Cold War, with its European and global realities, was waged in Nordic countries, as it was elsewhere. Lack of international attention does not imply, however, that post-Cold War changes in Northern Europe have been insignificant, or that the region was unaffected by the larger changes. The Nordic countries now find themselves confronted with far more complex challenges than generally perceived inside or outside of the region.

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PRESENT AND FUTURE SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NORTHERN EUROPE

At the dawn of the 21st century Europe is undergoing a profound process of change. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the changes of regime in Central and Eastern Europe, and the unification of Germany have changed the foreign, security, and defense policy parameters in Europe in essential ways.

The political and economic upheavals in Europe in the 1990s have offered a historic opportunity to realize the 1940s vision of a peaceful, united, and cooperative Europe. Today the various European countries are becoming linked together in an increasingly closer cooperation that transcends the previous divides, a cooperation that encompasses security, economic relations, welfare, and distribution. At the same time, European cooperation and the countries of Europe are being increasingly influenced by greater integration of the world economy, in the form of growing flows of trade, capital, technology, and information across national borders.

The European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) both play key roles in the economic, political, and security policy integration that is taking place between East and West. These organizations are undergoing profound changes in order to adapt to new demands upon them. The cooperation between six European countries that started with the European Economic Cooperation (EEC) in the 1950s in a divided Europe can in the course of the next decade become a framework for pan - European cooperation comprising some 30 member states.

NATO, a 1949 strategic alliance of western European countries joined by the United States, serving to deter military conflict between the Western democracies and the countries of the eastern bloc, has admitted new members from amongst its previous adversaries. Today it plays an important role as a broad security policy forum that bridges former dividing lines.

The countries of Europe have a joint responsibility for supporting the continuation of stable and democratic development in the countries of Eastern Europe which are undergoing reform. Solidarity in today's Europe means extending the zone of stability and welfare that the countries of Western Europe have enjoyed for decades as a result of closer economic integration to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, thereby building a foundation for development throughout Europe.

The ability of the countries of Europe, including Russia, to meet current challenges will shape the future of Europe. Cooperation between the European countries will largely determine the direction in which the continent develops --- forward towards greater security, stability, and

welfare; or backward towards rivalry and differences based on old enmities. The overriding challenge is to prevent the ideological iron curtain which used to divide Europe from being replaced by a welfare gap threatening economic and political stability on the continent.

Few decades in recent history have brought deeper changes to the Euro-Atlantic State system than the 1990s. The Cold War ended in a way no one ever expected, with equally unexpected results. New European, Euro-Atlantic, and global power relationships emerged very quickly as new dynamics evolved. All actors: institutions, states, and private subjects have sought to capitalize on improvements, exploit opportunities, or otherwise compensate in response to unanticipated changes. In the prevailing rhetoric, such events and developments have been described as achievements of goals long since established, as improvements leaving a regretful past further behind.

In this Strategic Research Project paper I argue that these changes have been impressive. But I find the assumption of a steady progress towards final perfection dubious. There are still security challenges in Europe in general and in Northern Europe in particular; they must be addressed. I will describe these challenges as I seek to answer the following questions:

- What are the security challenges facing the nations of Northern Europe?
- Are the nations of Northern Europe to be regarded as a single political entity in addressing these security policy challenges?

The post-Cold War era has revived several pre-Cold war issues within a much more complex global situation. This is particularly valid with respect to Northern Europe–Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Nordic issues are seldom addressed in contemporary debate and diplomacy in Europe. For decades, the region has been considered a harmonious part of the world, an excellent model with respect to social security, democracy, and inter-state cooperation, with very few complexities beyond the East-West confrontation.

Yet the Cold War, with its European and global realities, was shared by the Nordic countries with the rest of the world. Lack of international attention does not imply, further, that the post-Cold War changes in Northern Europe have been insignificant, or that the region is unaffected by the changes at large. The Nordic Countries today find themselves confronted with far more complex challenges than is generally perceived inside or outside the region.

NORDIC REALITIES

Public opinion in Northern Europe is unreliable when it comes to security policy. Many view Russia as the remaining security concern. They also believe Nordic countries should leave the defense of the West to NATO.

After the Cold War, the unreliable nature of public opinion in Northern Europe has surfaced from time to time. Those governments that have taken their citizens for granted have paid a heavy price. At the same time, it has been rather easy to implement some significant changes in policy when the governments accurately anticipated certain changes.

Virtually over night, in 1990, the Swedish government reversed its policy of not entering into the European Union. Economic realities directed the solution; what was impossible in September was possible one month later. But a sixty-year policy of neutrality had its price. During the campaign to become a member of the European Union (EU), Swedish foreign and security policy was muddled in order to avoid unpleasant questions from the public. Despite security concerns, the national referendum in November 1994 resulted in a very narrow margin in favor of entering the European Union. Since the decision, all polls and even the elections to the European Parliament have shown an increasing hostility within the Swedish electorate towards the EU. Three of the major political parties in Sweden -- Social Democrats, Center, Christian Democrats -- are split on the question of retaining membership in the Union. Sweden, together with Denmark and Great Britain, has decided not to introduce the common European currency, the Euro, when the other EU member nations do. In addition, its political leadership has not succeeded in emphasizing the security and defense dimension accruing from membership in the EU.

Finland is a different story. In Finland, public opinion has had no influence whatsoever on its foreign and security policy since World War II. An elite policy-making group headed by the President of the Republic has always handled the nation's security concerns. Finland has proven to the world that it is a master of the art of war. Three times in the last century Finland has prevailed against Russia, and later the Soviet Union, each time facing overwhelming military odds. As a result of their successes, the central policy-making group determined there is no need to explain to the public the security actions taken on the nation's behalf. Finland entered the Union together with Sweden in 1994, and public opinion has since been strongly in favor of membership. Additionally, in May 1996 the veteran Finnish politician Max Jacobson

predicted that Finland, together with Sweden and Austria, would apply for NATO membership in the next round of NATO enlargement.[1]

Norway's approach was entirely different from that of Sweden and Finland. On two occasions within one generation, 1972 and 1994, the government was defeated by small peripheral parties and citizens in remote regions in a vote on security policy as regards entry into the European Union. The oil boom in the 70s and 80s, the agricultural sector, and the fishing industry all contributed heavily to this defeat. During these two decades, Norway invested heavily, along its long western coast and in the north, in oil production. Revenues from oil and natural gas exports were used to invest in hinter regions of the nation, establishing a standard of living for the populace which rivaled that in more populated areas of the nation. As an Atlantic nation with very strong ties to the Anglo-Saxon peoples of the British Isles and North America, Norway has always distrusted Continental Europe. Oil revenue ensured Norway could safely opt to stay outside of the European vision of a united Europe. This fact contributed significantly to Norway's interest in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and NATO's future.

Denmark, much like Norway, has an anti-autocratic tradition. As a small nation, it has always been suspicious of any "super-European" construct. Denmark voted against the EU Maastricht-Agreement; Denmark was the only EU-member to do so. Within NATO, Denmark has been regarded as a "footnote" nation, one which has tried put its own stamp on foreign and security policy decisions which the larger European nations have regarded as necessary or at least uncontroversial. In this end, Denmark has only one choice: to pursue and maintain a close relationship with Germany, its powerful neighbor to the south.

REVOLUTIONS IN THE EURO-ATLANTIC STATE SYSTEM

In 1991 Europe witnessed a new geopolitical alignment with patterns unparalleled for centuries. In the East, the old Russian Empire imploded as the Soviet republics obtained independence. European states in the former Soviet "zone" of influence were freed. Throughout Eastern Europe, the one-party states and the "planned economies" were dismantled and replaced by regimes inspired by "western democracies". These geopolitical revolutions were followed by a geo-economic revolution -- globalization. From once-divided Germany to Siberia, markets and individuals replaced state planning as the prime user of goods and services. This Eastern European revival, together with the economic reforms in China, created an extension of the "world markets" unparalleled since the 19th Century.

In strategic and political terms, the economic revolutions led to equally profound political and security innovations. The Soviet Union's disappearance into yet another unsolved Russian enigma seemingly made the United States the "lone super-power".[2] Evaporation of the Soviet threat made Europe no longer vital to North America's defense. New "West-West" relationships were established as American influence in Western and Central Europe generally diminished.

In Europe proper, Germany's second unification upset the tenuous balance between France, Great Britain, Italy, and Germany. There was no possible parity between Germany and its European partners. Neither the French "la bombinette" nor London's conviction of privileged access to the White House compensate for Germany's 80 million citizens, the nation's central location within the continent, and its demonstrated economic prowess. The "partner in leadership" proposals from two successive American presidents convinced many Europeans that a "German Europe" was their destiny.[3] Europe has never before witnessed changes of such magnitude without a major war. The Superpowers' hegemony, the strength and discipline of institutions, and the integrated NATO and Warsaw Pact Commands decisively defused the revolution of its violent potential. The major exception was the Balkan situation, where Yugoslavia's previous neutrality ensured it had no close links to the other nations of Europe undergoing change. This isolation proved fatal for peaceful Balkan change.

THE END VERSUS THE RETURN OF HISTORY

The end of the Cold War was proclaimed by one author as the "End of History".[4] Analysts, diplomats, and politicians turned to an earlier liberal and romantic philosophy for explanations. A post-modern mixture of Kant, Hegel, Bentham, Spencer and Nietzsche, with Marx conveniently left out of the mix, portended the elimination of time and space and the withering away of the nation-state. It was perceived that the self-adjusting mechanisms of economics would ostensibly create general abundance and make war irrelevant. In any case, democracies, it was ascertained, would never again war against each other.[5]

One of the many paradoxes of the 20th Century was that never before had war been more severely condemned, nor had such enormous attempts been launched to ban war. Yet never before had war reached such catastrophic proportions. One hundred years ago, scholars and state leaders were convinced of the future impossibility of war. Despite these altruistic pronouncements and endeavors, no other century has seen so many die on battlefields. As societies have become more militarized, more people have suffered the ravages of war.

War has become neither rarer nor more humane. Wars have continuously widened in scope and range, with increasing destructiveness and lethality. Human progress in the 20th Century has been astonishing, and yet wars have not impeded this progress. War has created our state systems, modulated our institutions, inspired our technologies, and made us universally fearful and anxious.

The end of the Cold War did create radical changes. But our security concerns remain. History has not ended. We have not been born anew. A new human species has not seen the light of day. On the contrary, we have come out of the Cold War "freezer" and gone back into the "heat of history".

THE FUTURE OF ALLIANCES

Discussions of future wars in Europe fall into two categories: some analysts talk of Low Intensity Conflicts or Small Scale Contingencies at the fringes of Western Europe; others anticipate a major war, a conflict between NATO/EU and Russia. Conflicts of the first category are already taking place in Bosnia and Kosovo. Those who foresee a major war seem to anticipate large-scale conflict somewhat like the last world war. Modern Russia is perceived as a reduced scale Soviet Union, the "permanent troublemaker" in European history. Some controversial historical evidence identifies Russia as the only troublemaker in European history. Whatever comfort 19th century and Cold War historians find in this belief,[6] it is irrefutable that Russia must participate in any conflict which is to qualify as major.[7]

A new Euro-Atlantic conflict, as in the past, presupposes US participation. However, the US historically is not part of the European geopolitics. Neither does it possess an impressive dossier of consistent European diplomacy. The United States is by birth averse to Europe's cabinet diplomacy and power games. From this perspective, the US position as the global sea power and reluctant guarantor of global order on the threshold of the 21st century could be seen as one of history's great paradoxes. U.S. influence in European diplomacy will likely remain substantial, but US participation in future European wars could be as complicated as it has always been. United States intervention presupposes relevant perceptions by U.S. citizens of a threat to their national interest and the alliances created to protect this national interest. These need not correspond to any American peacetime obligations.

Few, if any, European wars have been "easier" to justify than the Second World War, a clear struggle between liberal constitutionalists and totalitarianism. The United States had to suffer aggression in the Pacific before it entered the war as an active participant. America's

return as a military power in the European Theater followed another Asian conflict.[8] U.S. participation in any cold or hot war by the "New NATO" created in Washington in April 1999 could thus be regarded as reasonably uncertain. Arguably, any such conflict could signify the breakup of NATO, as nearly came to pass during decisions on the Kosovo operations in Operation Allied Force in 1999.

Contemporary European diplomacy aims to create a super-state in Central and Western Europe under the dominance of major EU members. The ambitions of the key states are, however, as different as their histories, locations, and relative power. The declared aims of the European Union will require profound changes in the internal life of member states. Indeed EU threatens their future existence as nation-states. The continued existence of states as states, especially of smaller ones, could be called into question.[9]

I believe the US-led collective defense within NATO is as important to Western Europe as is the economy-driven EU Treaty of Rome. But many inside the EU-bureaucracy envision a non-NATO Western European defense scheme as a way to enhance Europe's ability to defend human rights and democratic values.

WHAT HAPPENED IN NORTHERN EUROPE?

Europeans deliberate about which of the many periodic post-war peace systems vanished as the Cold War terminated in 1990. The most obvious was the "Europe of Yalta"; many gladly said farewell to the Europe carved up by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill at the Crimean conference in 1945.[10] The dissolution of the Soviet Union liberated Europe from the dominance of the world's major powers (USA and Russia). Others noted that the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia meant that the post-1919 Central Europe of the Versailles Treaty had vanished as well.

Few analysts noticed the great changes taking place on Europe's northern flank. Here the changes too were profound, but these changes were unrelated to either the 1945 or 1919 constructs. The implosion of the Soviet Empire, with the concomitant reappearance of the Baltic republics as independent states coupled with a resurgence of Poland as a regional force, jeopardized Swedish and Danish ambitions of Baltic Sea leadership. They also spell an end to the Northern European subsystem of states established at the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

Northern Europe clearly did not return to the 18th century alignment in the years from 1989 to 1991. Rather, Northern Europe moved from the former "bipolarity" to a traditional triangular great-power environment. During the Cold War, the Western and Southern

Scandinavian states fused under firm American leadership, whereas Russia held sway over Finland, and Sweden guarded its historic neutrality with one of the strongest defense establishments of Western Europe. After 1990 all European states re-appeared as increasingly independent actors. In the 21st century, the major European EU-powers will have military capacities increasingly independent of the Cold War structures.[11] The geopolitical revolutions of the late 1980s triggered a strategic revolution in the late 1990s. Thus the Cold War Nordic subsystem, with the complexity of its immediate surroundings, has become Nordic-Baltic.

Access to strategically important commodities produced in or around the Nordic states has been of prime importance for all non-Nordic states since early modern history. The Scandinavian and Baltic areas furnished other European states with cereals, lumber, tar, iron, hemp, and furs. The growth of cities, global merchant fleets, and "blue water navies" were impossible without Nordic/Baltic supplies. The Nordic dynasties were instrumental to the creation of Europe and the modern world. From the 14th to the early 19th century, war between Scandinavian dynasties and adjacent kingdoms for regional predominance and European "great power" status followed one upon another. From the 1815 Vienna Treaty period onward, the Nordic region consisted of a geographically reduced Danish Monarchy and a Norwegian/Swedish union. Since this period, no lone Nordic State, nor even a Nordic alliance, has been able to fend off the encroachment of even a single adjacent great power.

The regional influence of Prussia, Russia, and the British Empire were replaced by the Hohenzollern German Empire, Soviet Union and the USA. The US has increasingly influenced the geopolitics of Northern Europe. Security of the Nordic states has depended since World War I entirely upon good relations between the regional powers and the superpowers. Internal military and geopolitical rivalry among the Nordic states has been reduced; now it is almost non-existent. Complete "pacification" of Northern Europe would require total demilitarization of the Nordic states and subsequently of the Northern Hemisphere. This could result only from unqualified assurance from neighbors that the security of the Nordic states would never be challenged. This is not very likely to occur in the near future.

The quarrels of regional powers surrounding Northern Europe have been primarily a result of uneasy "horse-trades" made far away from the region as the European states vied for power with a global strategy. Northern Europe became one extreme of a vector running from the Barents to the Black Sea/Eastern Mediterranean. Since the 17th century and the Bourbon - Vasa - Ottoman efforts to halt Romanov expansion, the Nordic states have been the minor players and most often pawns in European power players' efforts to solve the "Eastern question", "Great Games", and Far East diplomacy.

NEW NORDIC REALITIES

Most non-Nordic countries assume that the Nordic region has limited strategic importance. However, the states in the region have gone from being importers of security goods and services to exporters of democratic ideals and human rights activities to other parts of Europe and even throughout the world. Northern Europe's "great-power triangle", where Russian, American, and EU interests vie with one another, makes Scandinavia a vital region which cannot be ignored. European policies and ambitions toward the Nordic countries have American and Russian dimensions, inasmuch as their "Atlantic" policies and ambitions are functions of their "European" status. The return of the temporarily absent regional power -- Germany, now cloaked as the EU -- has come as a brutal surprise.

The relevance of the Northern European countries to Russia has increased since the Soviet's imperial implosion. The borders of the Nordic and Baltic States provide the "West's" nearest proximity to Russia's industrial, demographic, cultural, and political centers. The adjacent Kola Peninsula provides Russia's only year-round navigable access to the Atlantic. In Northern Europe, Russia faces the world's premier sea power America and modern European navies. In geo-economic terms, Russia's most direct access to oceanic lines of communication is by way of Northern Europe.

For America, Northern Europe's coastal littoral will remain important so long as both Russia and the US remain the principal nuclear powers. Any buildup of military presence in the European theater greatly increases the importance of Norwegian waters. The Scandinavian Peninsula is a thermometer for US national security. Potential threats to the US from Western Eurasia emerge here. The designations of Halford Mackinder, the "World Island", "The Rimland", and "The Heartland" still apply to northwestern Europe.[12] Nothing seems to change this, even if current Russian-American relations in the high North are less tense than they have been for a generation. Nor are the "Great Games" played out along the traditional Barents/Black Sea line of tension, nor are Far East diplomacy and strategy purely history. Historic Afghan wars have been expressions of "Great Games" between the reigning sea power and the Russian Euro-Asiatic land power. Historically, problems arising as far away as the Sea of Japan have affected the Nordic priorities of both Russia and the sea power of the day.[13]

Thus the Nordic states are located within a strategic continuum, whether for good or for ill, in which the major European powers are, and most likely will remain, absent but not disinterested. Conflicts occurring from future "Great Games" and Far East strategy might play

out for Europeans in the Nordic area, while developments unfold in China-Russian relations and within the American-Russia-China triangle.

Norway is one of the largest exporters of crude oil in the world; it is Europe's second largest producer of natural gas.[14] France, Germany, and most other EU nations will increasingly depend on Norwegian deliveries of energy. The Barents Sea - Stockman field on the Russian continental shelf may in the future become Europe's main source of natural gas.[15] If energy is developed there, Sweden and Finland, or their territorial seas, could well become conduits for energy to the continent. Northern Europe is the upper extremity of the North Sea "energy crescent" surrounding Europe. Any threat to the EU might well be taken out on Northern Europe.

American Middle East influence is one of the foundations for the continued superpower status of the United States. The US is the "guarantor" of the energy supply to an increasingly globalized economy. Any great-power rivalry or competition in the Middle East might easily have great repercussions in Northern Europe for strategic and geo-economic reasons. Middle-Eastern instability might well lead to "low intensity" threats to Norway (even terrorism). In the former case, one could assume today's alliances would hold and provide required support to Northern Europe. But in the latter case the alliance response is unknown; Europe might seek to carve out a unified middle ground. A great power rivalry over the Middle East would most likely lead to the generation of new alliances, rather than an evolution within the existing ones. This could expose the Nordic countries to highly divergent great-power interests.[16]

Future efforts by the major EU powers to stabilize Eastern Europe could spark Russian re-involvement in Central and Western European affairs. Should this occur, would US support be as certain as in the past? Russia no longer appears to demonstrate the megalomania exhibited in past incarnations as either the Soviet Union or the Russian Empire. Would the US willingly step in to counter Russian advances? Or would the United States, feeling unthreatened, turn "Nelson's Eye" toward Northern Europe's plight? NATO's Article V (the mutual defense clause) is not viable without a "Firm Sea Power" dedicated to European security. Only control of the Atlantic Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCS) will allay European concerns regarding a potential revanchist Russia – a very realistic concern given Russia's historic propensity to extend its sphere of influence westward following both the 1815 treaty and in the peace after World War II, concluded in 1945. US commitment must also be considered contingent upon future "West-West" relations and the global priorities and capabilities of the United States. Any Eastern European crises will almost assuredly turn "Atlantic" in Northern

Europe and re-establish the importance of the Nordic region in European and western geostrategic reality.

NORDIC INGENUITY

The "return of history" and international relevance to Northern Europe assures that the future is uncertain. The greatest immediate threat to security of the Nordic nations is the nations themselves. Demonstrable unwillingness and inability to perceive the new and much more complex security environment of the region is tangible in all Nordic capitals. Defense expenditures have been drastically reduced. The armed forces are being restructured in accordance with remote strategic concepts, such as UN peacekeeping support. These concepts reflect neither regional realities nor Scandinavia's European and global strategic importance. In the aftermath of the Cold War, Sweden and Finland joined the European Union. EU membership was a tacit renunciation of their long-held policies of neutrality. Their EU membership, as well as participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program, provided both nations with de facto cost-free defense guarantees. Within the EU, both nations have striven for enhancing EU independent military capacity for action. With blue-eyed optimism, Sweden and Finland strive for military independence from the Europe to the south, without much thought of the possible consequences.

In Norway, the situation is just as confused. In 1994, by a slight majority the people rejected the European Union for a second time.[17] "Intellectual" Norwegian politicians, diplomats and analysts feel Norway has excluded itself from Europe's "new and higher civilization." Many consider that the continuous shadowboxing on the issue of EU membership blocks serious discussion and efforts to explore alternative security strategies. These politicians foster a nostalgia for the simplicity of the Cold War. Some simply view Norway as the guardian of a Utopian society with a mission to care for everything good in Europe and the world at large.

Coherent, long-term strategies and sufficiently robust security policies are wanting, despite obvious challenges. Norway is a Euro-Atlantic producer of energy, with Europe's largest sea domain. Norway forms the northern extremity of Europe, as well as the Western extremity of Eurasia. Norway is a prosperous "small state" amongst the "great states" of Europe. Norway does not, as the rest of Europe, suffer from a severely strained public treasury. But Norway shares with the rest of Europe a Russia oscillating between bankruptcy and momentous opulence. Fortune has given Norway incredibly much materially, but few genuine friends. A more difficult test of virtue is hard to imagine.

Lack of serious strategic thought, even contempt for strategic analysis by decision-makers coupled with a disregard for relevant historical experience, is surely a portent of future potential troubles. The weaker the Nordic countries are, the greater is the potential for mischief by neighbors. Should the US become distracted by events in other regions and lose some of its focus on Europe, the continent could grow less and less stable.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1989, President Bush (the elder) promised to keep substantial US nuclear and conventional forces in Europe. His administration firmly believed that even if the imminent threat from the Soviet Union had diminished, the United States should maintain a substantial military force in Europe for the foreseeable future. This position was justified by the US administration through observation of the unpredictable political situation in Eastern Europe, US need for military power projection into other areas like the Middle East and, last but not least, the realization that even reduced Russian military forces would still be large enough to exert influence upon Western Europe should US forces leave. All European government heads who spoke with President Bush requested US forces remain in Europe. Continued US military presence served also as a US investment, ensuring its participation in European policy matters.[18] This US policy was to prevail in the years to come, regardless of who was residing in the White House.

My analysis's has pursued realistic responses to two policy questions:

- What are the security challenges facing the nations of Northern Europe?
- Are the nations of Northern Europe to be regarded as an entity when it comes to these security challenges?

I have addressed the first question on the security challenges facing Northern Europe. Turning now to my second question. Phillip Zelikow offers the foundation for my response:[19]

> No European nation will probably be able to execute a larger unilateral campaign outside its own territory and defeat an opponent that is able to execute modern military operations. European nations will therefore have to plan for sustaining such operations through a coalition. The coalition will have to be more than political; it must integrate the coalition armed forces by utilizing burden-sharing and specialization. Without such

a coalition, national armies will be not only less effective, but also unable to fight modern sustained combat operations.

The Nordic countries are among those nations unable to successfully fight a war on their own territory independently. Fighting independently, they cannot defeat an enemy capable of conducting modern military operations. The only potential enemy is Russia — if not now, perhaps in 10-15 years. The issue of security breaks down to conventional security and nuclear security. Concerning nuclear weapons, both Norway and Denmark realized as early as 1949 that only NATO Membership would provide them with a nuclear shield. However, Finland could not and Sweden would not avail themselves of nuclear protection by joining NATO. Now both are free to do whatever they wish. Modern warfare has changed in nature: a lonely fight against a real enemy dooms Northern Europe from the outset. The blithe contention that Northern Europe could remain outside a future war is moot; modern technology has reduced the geography. The Scandinavian Peninsula and the Baltic Sea are one theater of operations, easily within the reach of a continental power. Understanding the impossibility of staying outside of a future regional war in Northern Europe has not yet been accepted by most Swedish and Finnish political leaders. Old "truths" are hard to kill.

The question of political influence is more easily understood. Finland often refers to its influence in the EU as crucial to the nation. Sweden has proclaimed it will give the European EU Policy a Nordic dimension. So long as Sweden and Finland are left outside of the "Transatlantic" dialogue, one of NATO's four core functions, they will remain marginalized with respect to security and defense matters. In short, NATO-membership is still the language of European "security". If you do not speak it, you will not be understood.

Membership in the EU may be necessary, but it alone is insufficient. A further enlargement of the European security architecture will include both the EU and NATO organizations. One can only achieve influence in the organizations one belongs to.

Nordic countries face an additional risk of marginalization within the European policy scheme. Some thirty years after "Gaullism" reigned, France appears to be back in the "mainstream" of the Atlantic Alliance, for many reasons: Germany's reunification, the need to reduce expenditures on defense, American leadership, and the end of the Cold War. If France is able to establish itself as the European leader within the EU in a partnership with the United States, it will be all the more important for the Nordic countries do the same.

For all the Nordic countries, the "Transatlantic dimension" is the ultimate question.[20] Washington is now the capital of the world's lone superpower, and it is not easy for small

nations to get the attention of the US leadership.[21] Nordic countries standing outside NATO soon discover nothing is more tiresome to a member of the American leadership than incessant recitation of the dogma of neutrality.

In a Europe of important, but not always vital, interest to the US, both South and Central Europe stand out. The Mediterranean provides access to the Middle East. Oil, terrorism, fundamentalism and the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) from rogue states are but a few of the issues attracting US attention to NATO's southern flank . Additionally, the United States is also committed in Bosnia and Kosovo -- both are key NATO roles. In Central Europe, the question of a further NATO enlargement eastward will soon arise again. The North should also be of concern given Russian strategic nuclear retaliation capability, visibly represented by the Kola Peninsula base complex. There may be no need for any Nordic interference in this matter so long as Washington and Moscow can keep the issue in check.

Distinguished political scientists in Sweden and Finland who wish to avoid the question of NATO membership speak and write of the need for a new "Nordic Defense Agreement". In a time of peace and prosperity, it is easy to be "too smart" and "too tactical" when a long-term strategy is needed. It is time to act when the circumstances are favorable, not when the tide has turned and the battle for attention and "security favors" has been joined.

Even now it takes some time to build mutual confidence and trust. In 1990 the Norwegian historian Olav Riste observed that "A nation that is being judged as a good, trustworthy and reliable ally will have better prospects for substantial and effective help."[22]

In the short term, Europe is most vulnerable to regional and sub-regional conflicts. We are currently witnessing ongoing struggles in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Chechnya. We should anticipate possible future conflicts between Hungary and Rumania, Greece and Turkey, Russia and the Ukraine. The issue of NATO intervention will most likely be decided on an ad-hoc basis, as were the actions in Bosnia and Kosovo.

My analysis identifies the following present and future security issues in Northern Europe:

Vital:

- Defend the nation and the other Nordic nations against any external threat.
- Maintain American presence in Europe.
- Maintain NATO as a viable and effective security organization for all alliance partners, present and future.

Important:

- The national security of Poland and the Baltic states.
- The stability and integrity of the European Union.
- Enlargement of the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic region.
- Peace, freedom and prosperity in Europe, including Russia.
- Non-proliferation of WMD, globally.

Like all other nations of Europe, the four Nordic nations of Northern Europe must allocate necessary funds and other resources in order to achieve these goals. In principle the interests listed above are shared by all the nations – Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway.

The four nations of Northern Europe clearly should be regarded as an entity when it comes to security issues. All the nations are influenced by the same security mechanisms. Therefore they must find a common solution to their security challenges, based on their shared security interests listed above. This common solution for the near future might well be found in a mutual NATO-membership. In a more distant future, if the EU is able to establish a credible common security and defense apparatus, a shared membership in the Union might well be the right answer to their security challenges.

To ensure that a nation has the necessary defense at all times is a great and continuous challenge. A return to the 15th Century Kalmar Union[23] could possibly protect Scandinavia from encroachment by regional powers as did the original union. But realpolitik obliges us to sustain a strong transatlantic security linkage if our citizens are to enjoy continued prosperity. Northern Europe has become a region of increased strategic importance within a dynamic post-Cold War Europe.

WORD COUNT = 6,054

ENDNOTES

[1] Consolidation and Main Discussions, Yearbook of Finnish foreign policy 1995, Helsinki

[2] Nadya Arbatova, Inside the Russian Enigma, Oslo, Europa-Programmet, 1998

[3] As Jeffrey J. Andersson and John B. Goodman wrote. "One might just as easily conclude that Germany has every reason, rational or otherwise, to remain firmly ensconced in its institutional web, since it is only a matter of time before it emerges as the new hegemon on the European continent. Just as the United States sought to remake Europe in its own image after 1945, now a unified Germany is doing the same as it reforges international rules and organizations in a manner consistent with its new interests and capabilities." In Keohane, Robert O. After the Cold War, Harvard University Press, Mass. USA, 1993, P 61

[4] Francis Fukuyama, The Last Man and the End of History, London, 1992

[5] The impossibility of wars between democracies seems universally accepted. In Immanuèl Kant's Zum Ewigen Frieden, 1776, republican institutions in all states are considered necessary to avoid wars. Kant's program has made him one of the founding fathers of modern pacifism. But his preconditions have not been attained. On the contrary, in his first article, he asserts that professional armies should be abolished. Today, they are being re-introduced throughout Europe. In his fourth article, he states that no state shall have foreign debt. All major contemporary states have that in abundance. Democracies, it has been maintained far into the 20th century, are prone to perpetual and total war, since they cannot accept regimes other than their own.

[6] In the 19th century, Russia where the guarantor of restoration in European politics and diplomacy, blocking all efforts to introduce liberal regimes or geopolitical revisions. In French and British historiography, Russia became the bulwark of reaction. The perspectives and rhetoric of the Restoration Years, and the decades from 1848 to 1890, had an impressive renaissance during the Cold War.

[7] Since the 17th century, conflicts between European great powers have depended on Russia's participation to become truly European in scope. This was the case initially even with respect to World War II.

[8] In 1949, Mao's Chinese communists overran the Koumintang Chinese republic. In 1950, the North Koreans invaded South Korea. Far East events made the US National Security Council adopt its Resolution #68, which implied the militarization of Containment.

[9] Nor should, in principal, further geopolitical innovations be excluded. The prevalent West European view was, as states crumbled and new borders emerged in Central Europe, that this proved their historical "immaturity".

[10] The expression "Europe of Yalta" is of mainly French coinage, since France was not represented there.

[11] At the European Council's Helsinki Summit in December 1999, it was decided to establish an independent European military capacity substantiating the EU's Common Foreign and Defense Policy under the auspices of Mr. Javier Solana, former Secretary General of NATO. The concrete measures are at present modest, but principally and politically important.

[12] Halford Mackinder, The Geographical Pivot of History, London, 1904

[13] The Finns participated in the Russian-Japanese war in 1905 as part of the Russian Empire. The British had recently concluded an alliance with Japan and protested when the Danish replenished the Tsar's Baltic Fleet on its way to its disastrous encounter with the Japanese Imperial Fleet. The disappearance of the Tsar's Baltic Fleet eased British acceptance of Norwegian independence from Sweden in 1905.

[14] Admiral Kibsgaard, Strategi-Sikkerhetspolitikk og Energiproduksjon, Europaprogrammet, Oslo, 1998.

[15] E. Velikov and V. Kuznetsov, Russia's Marine Oil and Gas Industry Approaches the Arctic Shelf, Europaprogrammet, Oslo, 1997.

[16] Firstly, there has never before been expressed any "NATO solidarity" in the Middle East. Whether the last expression of solidarity, after the terrorist attacks on 11 September, 01 is pointing towards a new reality, remains to be seen. Secondly, any configuration typically includes more players than usually perceived. That is also the case in the ongoing war on terrorism.

[17] Norway applied for membership in 1962, 1967, 1970 and in 1991. In the 1960s, French President De Gaulle vetoed the enlargements. In 1972, negotiations with the United Kingdom, Denmark and Norway were concluded, but in the Norwegian referendum, 53,5% of the votes cast rejected membership. New negotiations with Norway, Sweden and Finland were concluded in March 1994. In the subsequent national referendum, Norwegian membership was rejected by 52,2% of the voters.

[18] Zelikow, Philip & Rice, Condoleezza, Germany unified and Europe transformed, p 189. Lukacs, John, The end of the twentieth century and the end of the modern age, p 109,Ticnor & Fields, 1993, New York.

[19] Zelikow, Philip, The masque of institutions, in Survival, spring 1996.

[20] Cambone, Stephen A, The implications of US foreign and defense policy for the Nordic-Baltic region, Nordic-Baltic security: an international perspective, Washington DC, CSIS, 1994

[21] Neustadt, Richard E, Alliance politics, New York, Colombia University Press, 1970, p 78

[22] Riste, Olav, Eit minimumsforsvar for Norge?, Oslo, Institutt for Forsvarsstudier, 1992, p 8

[23] The Kalmar Union was formed by the three crowns of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway in 1397 in order to reduce and inhibit influence of the German States in Scandinavia. Sweden abandoned the union in 1523. The union of Denmark and Norway lasted, however, until 1814, when Norway was again forced into a union with Sweden following the defeat of Napoleon, with whom the Danes had been allied.

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